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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/FO, NEA/ELA, NEA/RA
G/TIP FOR TAYLOR
P FOR DRUSSELL, RRANGASWAMY
DRL/NESA FOR WHITMAN, BARGHOUT
PARIS FOR RWALLER
USUN FOR WOLFF/GERMAIN/SCHEDLBAUER
NSC FOR SHAPIRO, MCDERMOTT
OVP FOR HMUSTAFA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ELAB](#) [KCRM](#) [KPAO](#) [KTIP](#) [KWMN](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SMIG](#)
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SUBJECT: LEBANON: EMBASSY DELIVERS 2009 TIP REPORT

REF: STATE 64424

SUMMARY

1. (SBU) On June 23, per reftel instructions, Poloff delivered the 2009 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report to the Surete Generale's (Immigration) Director of the Nationalities, Passports, and Foreigners Department General Siham Harake. We informed Harake that Lebanon had been downgraded to a Tier 2 Watch List country and explained the implications of this, including the possible sanctions and waivers involved if a country moves into Tier 3 status. Poloff described steps the GOL must take to improve its ranking, such as investigate and prosecute trafficking offenses under existing law, convict and punish trafficking offenders, develop and institute formal procedures to identify victims of trafficking among vulnerable populations, consider measures to lessen the abuse of the artist work permit as a conduit for sex trafficking and enforce Lebanese law prohibiting the confiscation of passports of foreign maids.

2. (SBU) Regarding the issue of confiscating foreign maids' passports, Harake said it was within her power to end this practice. She said she would ask for her supervisor's opinion, but said it was a relatively easy problem to correct. Movement on other recommendations would require further interagency talks with the Ministry of Justice and possible technical assistance from the United State on how to develop formal procedures for identifying TIP victims.

3. (SBU) Harake acknowledged that Lebanon needs to do more to solve its TIP problem. She said that the withdrawal of Shia Ministers from the cabinet in 2006, the July 2006 war with Israel, and the 18-month shutdown of Lebanon's parliament 2006-08 all led to a lack of progress regarding Lebanon's TIP problems. Harake added that she personally tried everything she could to get some of the issue solved, but was unsuccessful

COMMENT

4. (SBU) Post submitted a request for technical assistance

from G/TIP on behalf of the GOL to help develop formal procedures for identifying TIP victims and drafting anti-TIP legislation. In addition, Post will organize a TIP roundtable discussion, composed of civil society leaders, GOL officials, and journalists to highlight and discuss problems and solutions to this problem. The Public Affairs Office posted the report to the Embassy website. We will follow up with the GOL on ending the practice of taking domestic workers' passports and other TIP matters. End Comment.
SISON